

ADDRESS,

TO THE

INHABITANTS OF SHEFFIELD AND THE
NEIGHBOURHOOD

ON

THE CHOLERA MORBUS,

PREPARED BY THE

MEDICAL BOARD,

AT THE

REQUEST OF THE PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE.

SHEFFIELD.

PRINTED BY J. BLACKWELL, IRIS OFFICE.

1831.

ADDRESS, &c.

DOUBTS as to the presence of Asiatic Cholera in England no longer exist ; neither do there any longer appear to be doubts that the disease is communicable from one person to another. Under these circumstances, the Members of the Medical Board of this Town, anxious to co-operate with the Provisional Committee for the prevention and mitigation of Cholera, deem it a duty to address their fellow-townsmen, and the inhabitants in the neighbouring villages, of whatever rank or condition in life, upon the subject of such precautionary measures as it is incumbent on all persons to adopt.

Every one naturally asks,—What are the best means of securing exemption from the pestilential disease which threatens to invade us ? We answer,—Attend sedulously and unremittingly to the general directions here delivered relative to the following points :—

1st. VENTILATION.

The free and daily admission of air into all the rooms or apartments of a house, from the garret to the cellar, is a mat-

ter of the highest importance. Windows and doors, therefore, should be widely opened every day, for several hours. All obstructions to the passage of air up chimneys, whether by night or day, should be completely removed; as for instance, chimney-boards, straw, paper, or other matters. Fires, too, should, occasionally, be made in spare rooms.

Every person's bedding, moreover, should be daily ventilated. Mattress, bed, and clothes, are to be removed from the bedstead and exposed to a current of air in the bed-room, for an hour or two each day.

The more numerous a family, or the more crowded any dwelling is, the greater the necessity of attending to these rules.

2d. CLEANLINESS.

Personal and domestic cleanliness,* the next most important means of preserving health, requires the strictest attention on the present urgent occasion. All rooms and their appurtenances generally, cellars, back-kitchens, sculleries, closets, cupboards, together with yards, stables, cowhouses, pigsties, &c. should be kept as clean and dry as possible; dirt and filth of any kind speedily removed; soughs and drains cleaned out: and the depots of matters from which offensive emanations proceed should be frequently cleansed.

Observe :—

1st. That no emanations or effluvia are more pestiferous

* i. e. frequent washing of the body generally with soap and water, and change of the dress worn next the skin.

than those arising from the human body, when they are in a state of concentration; as, for example, where many persons are confined within a small and ill ventilated place: 2nd, that it is these emanations, together with those which proceed from other living animals, and from the vast quantity of decomposing animal and vegetable matter which always exists within the boundaries of an extensive and populous town, which so imperatively demand ventilation and cleanliness.

Now it is evident that the only effectual way of diminishing the large mass of noxious effluvia, or vapours, more or less inseparable from a numerous collection of human beings, is, by each individual striving as much as possible to remove or correct the various sources of impure air, which may exist on his own particular premises.

3rd. HABITS—FOOD.

It is impossible to insist too much on temperance in eating as well as in drinking. The food should be plain, wholesome, and nutritious; taken in *moderate* quantity, and after suitable intervals. Long fasting succeeded by an immoderate, or what some call a hearty meal, enfeebles the digestion, and thence the whole frame. It is the quantity which the stomach will digest, and not the quantity which can be devoured, that strengthens and exhilarates a person. Avoid apples, pears, and crude fruits in general.

DRINK.

Sobriety is here of the first moment. Spirits, especially when swallowed neat, destroy the powers of the stomach, affect

the nervous system, and debilitate the entire frame. Let the intemperate, and especially habitual spirit drinkers, beware! upon such, Cholera has in particular made its attacks. Unfiltrated or impure water, acid wines and drinks in general should be avoided. Sound malt liquor or wine and water, may be taken at meals.

SMOKING.

The tobacco commonly used in this country, is a drug of the most pernicious nature. It acts immediately on the nervous system, weakens the powers of digestion, and thus enervates the body generally. The smoke of tobacco merely conceals offensive odours; it has no virtue whatever in counteracting infection.

EXERCISE.

Every person, male or female, ought to regard daily bodily exercise in the open air, as one of the first practical duties of life. No weather, scarcely, should prevent it. If neglected, debility of all the animal powers will, sooner or later, inevitably ensue. Exercise strengthens the functions of the body, and renders the mind cheerful. It should be neither too violent, nor too long continued. The mind, also, ought to be suitably and cheerfully engaged.

SLEEP.

Exercise must be tempered with a due proportion of rest and sleep. Long watchings, the practice of sitting up late, or indulging immoderately in sleep, are alike pernicious.

CLOTHING.

This should be warm and appropriate to the present season, in order to resist the combined influence of cold and moisture.

The feet ought in particular to be kept warm. Let the wearers of light shoes and stockings beware ;—Cholera is no respecter of persons. As an additional and highly useful means of protecting the body from the effects of cold, we would strongly recommend a broad flannel wrapper to be worn round the loins. Every one may procure this.

4th. INFECTION,

The means of escaping infection are simple ; in the first place, avoid being in the same atmosphere with the sick ; and in the next, *free ventilation*. This is the grand means ; for if the infectious atmosphere be sufficiently diluted with pure air, the danger of its affecting others, ceases. In conjunction with free ventilation, the chlorides of soda and lime may likewise be employed ; especially as they destroy all offensive smells.

Such are the principal means of securing freedom from the attacks of disease ; *ventilation of houses and persons ; temperance in the use of wholesome food and drink ; warm clothing ; proper exercise ; regular habits and the avoiding of all excesses or debilitating causes whatever.*

The Medical Board would particularly remind the public, that unless the Provisional Committee be strenuously seconded in their efforts by individual exertion, the benevolent intentions of that Committee must, in a great measure, be frustrated, and its labours rendered of comparatively little value. The danger is common ; every man is interested ; let every man, then, do his duty. The share of labour to each will be trifling ; the

benefit resulting to the public, immense. Wherever strict precautionary measures have been adopted, there the ravages of the Indian distemper have been proportionally less. We call, therefore, on each, and every member of society, to be active in the common cause, and to expect with confidence as a reward, —*exemption from Cholera.*

Sheffield, Nov. 17, 1831.

Persons at whose Houses this Address shall be delivered, are requested carefully to preserve, and occasionally to re-peruse it.